

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following is a complete, marked up listing of revised claims with a status identifier in parentheses, underlined text indicating insertions, and strikethrough and/or double brackets indicating deletions.

Listing of the Claims:

1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A biodegradable molded article comprising:
a biodegradable expanded molded article molded in a specified shape; and
a coating film attached to a surface of the biodegradable expanded molded article, the film being mainly made of a biodegradable plastic and having at least hydrophobicity,
the biodegradable expanded molded article being molded, through steam expansion, from a slurry or dough molding material mainly made of a starch ~~and~~ or a derivative thereof and prepared by adding water to the starch or the derivative thereof,
the starch ~~and~~ or the derivative thereof containing high-amylose starch or a derivative thereof, and
the biodegradable molded article being obtainable by heating the molding material and the coating film at a temperature not less than a softening point of the biodegradable plastic but less than a melting point of the biodegradable plastic, wherein (i) the molding through steam expansion and (ii) softening the coating film and attaching the softened coating film to the surface of the biodegradable expanded molded article are performed concurrently.

2. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The biodegradable molded article as set forth in claim 1, wherein the starch ~~and a~~ or the derivative thereof contains not less than 50 weight % high-amylose starch or a derivative thereof.

3. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A biodegradable molded article comprising:
a biodegradable expanded molded article molded in a specified shape; and
a coating film attached to a surface of the biodegradable expanded molded article, the film being mainly made of a biodegradable plastic and having at least hydrophobicity,
said biodegradable expanded molded article being molded, through steam expansion, from a slurry or dough molding material mainly made of a starch ~~and~~ or a derivative thereof and prepared by adding water and polyvinyl alcohol to the starch or the derivative thereof, and

the biodegradable molded article being obtainable by heating the molding material and the coating film at a temperature not less than a softening point of the biodegradable plastic but less than a melting point of the biodegradable plastic, wherein (i) the molding through steam expansion and (ii) softening the coating film and attaching the softened coating film to the surface of the biodegradable expanded molded article are performed concurrently.

4. (ORIGINAL) The biodegradable molded article as set forth in claim 3, wherein the polyvinyl alcohol has a polymerization degree of not less than 1500.

5. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The biodegradable molded article as set forth in claim 3, wherein the polyvinyl alcohol has a saponification degree of not less than 75%.

6. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The biodegradable molded article as set forth in claim 1, wherein the coating film is mainly made of a modified polyester.

7. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The biodegradable molded article as set forth in claim 1, wherein the coating film is biaxially stretched.

8. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The biodegradable molded article as set forth in claim 1, wherein the molding material further contains a water-insoluble fiber.

9. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The biodegradable molded article as set forth in claim 1, wherein the expanded molded article accounts for not less than 60 weight % of total weight of the biodegradable molded article.

10. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The biodegradable molded article as set forth in claim 1, wherein the molding material contains water which accounts for 20 weight % to 70 weight %, assuming that the biodegradable molded article is 100 weight %.

11. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The biodegradable molded article as set forth in claim 1, wherein the coating film is directly and substantially adhered to the surface.

12. (ORIGINAL) The biodegradable molded article as set forth in claim 1, wherein the biodegradable expanded molded article has a final water content between 3 weight % and 20 weight %.

13. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The biodegradable molded article as set forth in claim 4, wherein the polyvinyl alcohol has a saponification degree of not less than 75%.

14. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The biodegradable molded article as set forth in claim 3, wherein the coating film is mainly made of a modified polyester.

15. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The biodegradable molded article as set forth in claim 3, wherein the coating film is biaxially stretched.

16. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The biodegradable molded article as set forth in claim 3, wherein the molding material further contains a water-insoluble fiber.

17. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The biodegradable molded article as set forth in claim 3, wherein the expanded molded article accounts for not less than 60 weight % of total weight of the biodegradable molded article.

18. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The biodegradable molded article as set forth in claim 3, wherein the molding material contains water which accounts for 20 weight % to 70 weight %, assuming that the biodegradable molded article is 100 weight %.

19. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The biodegradable molded article as set forth in claim 3, wherein the coating film is directly and substantially adhered to the surface.

20. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The biodegradable molded article as set forth in claim 3, wherein the biodegradable expanded molded article has a final water content between 3 weight % and 20 weight %.